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# Statue of Liberty National Monument & Ellis Island

## News

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Seldom Seen Spaces on Ellis Island Now Virtually Accessible**

**New York, NY** – The National Park Service announced today the launch of its virtual tour of the South Side of Ellis Island on the Ellis Island website.

<http://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/photosmultimedia/virtual-tour.htm>

This virtual tour of the south side of the island consists of over 40 spherical, interactive photographs created from detailed 3D scans of buildings, landscapes and many spaces that are seldom, if ever, seen by the visiting public.

The tour also includes historic photographs of the same spaces in their original condition and narratives on their purpose, history, and construction. Animated fly-throughs add to the richness of the experience.

“These buildings and spaces are of paramount historical importance. The stories they tell are an integral part of the Ellis Island saga. We are thrilled to be able to make this extraordinary virtual experience available to the public” said John Hnedak, Deputy Superintendent.

The South Side of Ellis Island is the location of the hospital and ward complex where the illnesses of prospective immigrants were treated. Most patients were cured and allowed into the United States. A small number (about 2%) were required to return to their country of origin.

The park’s private, non-profit partner, Save Ellis Island, is dedicated to the protection of these buildings, and conducts reservation-only tours of several of them.

The virtual tour was produced by the Historic American Buildings Survey, a division of the National Park Service Heritage Documentation Program.

The October 15th launch celebrates the anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, one of the most significant pieces of preservation law ever enacted in the United States, without which these important historic structures on Ellis Island might not have survived.

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The project dovetails with broader National Park Service Centennial initiatives including the Director's *Call to Action #17 Go Digital* and the *Find Your Park* campaign that are designed to reach and engage new audiences.

### ***About the Heritage Documentation Program***

The Heritage Documentation Programs (HDP) administers the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), the Federal Government's oldest preservation program, and its companion programs: the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) and the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS). HDP conducts a nationwide documentation program in partnership with state and local governments, private industry, preservation groups, and Federal agencies. Documentation produced through the programs constitutes the nation's largest archive of historical architectural, engineering and landscape documentation. <http://www.nps.gov/hdp/>

### ***About Save Ellis Island***

Save Ellis Island was formed to raise the necessary funds and oversee the rehabilitation, preservation and adaptive re-use of the unrestored buildings located primarily on the south side of Ellis Island. The Save Ellis Island Foundation is the designated partner by general agreement of the National Park Service one of the nation's most trusted and dependable organizations in preserving our historic and cultural landmarks. <http://www.saveellisland.org/>

### ***About Ellis Island***

Opened on January 1, 1892, Ellis Island became the nation's premier federal immigration station. In operation until 1954, more than 12 million immigrants were processed at the station. It has been estimated that more than 40 percent of America's population today can trace their ancestry through Ellis Island. After 30 years of abandonment, the main building was restored by The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation and, working in partnership with the National Park Service, opened as a museum in September, 1990. <http://www.nps.gov/elis>

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